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Ten Commandments for Attendants at any Church.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.
The Community Church of New York.

I.
Thou shalt not come to service late,
Nor for th' Amen refuse to wait.

II.
Thy noisy tongue thou shalt restrain
When speaks the organ its refrain.

III.
But when the hymns are sounded out,
Thou shalt lift up thy voice and shout.

IV.
The endmost seat thou shalt leave free,
For more must share the pew with thee.

V.
The offering-plate thou shalt not fear,
But give thine uttermost with cheer.

VI.
Thou shalt this calendar peruse,
And look here for the church's news.

VII.
Thou shalt the minister give heed,
Nor blame him when thou'rt disagreed.

VIII.
Unto thy neighbour thou shalt bend,
And if a stranger, make a friend.

IX.
Thou shalt in every way be kind,
Compassionate, of tender mind.

X.
And so, by all thy spirit's grace,
Thou shalt show God within this place.

Editorial.

In taking up our duties once again we would gratefully return thanks to our friend, the Rev. Alfred Turner, who kindly acted for us during our absence in America. He not only kept things going, but furnished our readers with articles of varied interest, not the least important amongst them being those which fostered the fraternal feelings awakened by the closer contact between Britain and America. The visit of the American visitors to the North of Ireland was a great success. They have confessed their great enjoyment and their no less gratitude. The complaint we met with in London that these kindly and capable Americans had not been so much engaged in good works as they might have been, had less foundation here than in England. Several of our Congregations were privileged to hear their message and to enjoy their stories. The result is that they will be often present in the minds of the friends they made amongst us, and nowhere will the desire for a continuance of such interchanges be keener than it will be in the North of Ireland. We now know each other better, can more clearly envisage each other's problems, more fully appreciate our common ideals and principles. Churches and ministers, merely nominal hitherto, have become centres of activity and real personalities like those we know at home. Their success is our success; their cherished hopes mean objects with which we can co-operate. There is no reason why the new century already begun should not proceed with courageous enterprise and challenging endeavour. What we would have it be that we can make it if we will. Having been permitted to ponder over a glorious past we need now to plan and labour for a more glorious future.

Notes of the Month.

Our hearty congratulations to the new Moderator, the Rev. W. H. Townley-Tilson, M.A. We would also couple therewith the two congregations of Grey Abbey and Newtownards with which he is associated as active minister. We trust that during his year of office he will have health and strength to meet the claims incidental to his new position in our Non-Subscribing Church. For a man of energy and vision there is much that can be done to rouse us to greater activity. The signs of the times are propitious for liberal religion. May we under his guidance be enabled to give reality to our hopes and actuality to our vision. We feel assured that if he can point the way there are many ready to tread the path of service and of sacrifice.

* *

There is a very strong feeling on both sides of the Altantic that the interesting interchanges of ministers made possible by the recent Centennials have proved so helpful that steps should be taken to secure their continuance. At a meeting held during the Centennial Gatherings in London Dr. Dodson and the Rev. H. J. Rossington were appointed by the two delegations to draw up a letter to be submitted to the American Unitarian Association and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association soliciting their sympathetic consideration of such a proposal. That has been done, and although it is too early as yet to obtain an answer we are able to report that both in London and in Boston the authorities are ready to give the proposal a very warm welcome. A permanent *entente cordiale* is therefore likely to be the outcome, we most confidently believe.

* *

But what the churches of the two great Anglo-Saxon speaking communities can do on a small scale should be possible by other agencies of good-will on a still larger scale. Recently we have had in Ulster doctors and their wives from the United States. They received the heartiest welcome and the most ready hospitality. We heard in another quarter that so impressed were the American lawyers in England last year with the success of their visit that they have now sent over a cordial invitation to their fellow-jurists in Great Britain to visit America at an early date. It is more than probable that such an invitation will be accepted. The more such a movement of interchange grows the more the possibility of world security and peace. It is ignorance which begets prejudice, suspicion, international ill-will. To meet and mingle freely is to produce an atmosphere as inimical to these undesirables, as is the bright light of the sun to mist and miasma. May the good work freely proceed until common action follows upon common understanding and respect.

* *

As a consequence of the large amount of space given this month to some rather unusual but very important matters, such as the Centennial gatherings at home and abroad, some ordinary features of the Magazine have to yield place. At the General Synod it was suggested that at our discretion our columns might be opened for matters of correspondence. While we see some difficulty in the adoption of such a suggestion—especially that of discursiveness which characterises most epistolary efforts sent to the press—we are giving it sympathetic consideration with a view to its adoption if possible at an early date. Our readers may therefore be thinking on these lines, always remembering that only matters of general interest capable of compressed treatment will be acceptable. Political matters will be rigorously excluded; personalities we do not anticipate as probable.

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The Boston Centennial.

The above, held from May 10th to May 16th, is deserving of mention both by reason of its unique character and its outstanding success. Greatly helped, as we believe, by the strenuous labours of our British representatives prior to the assembly in Boston, the attendances were large and inspiring. Delegates from all parts of the very wide American Constituency were brought together in eager and expectant mood. They were not disappointed. Beginning with a very crowded Reception in the Memorial Hall of Harvard University on Sunday, May 10th., the cordial fraternising on that occasion gave its character to the whole of the subsequent proceedings. Followed by the service in Sanders Theatre, at which there must have been fully three thousand persons present, the tide of devotional feeling and fellowship was strongly evident. The sermon of the Rev. Paul Revere Frothingham was a notable utterance and justified his selection for a most responsible task. The other parts of the service, entrusted to different national representatives, with Dr. Eliot in charge, were impressively done, while the singing both of hymns and anthem was excellent.

One of the features of this very memorable series of meetings was the generous recognition accorded by the American hosts to their visitors from over-seas. To them was entrusted the conduct of worship either at Morning Prayer or at Vesper Service on several occasions during the week. Again, on the great day of celebration, Tuesday, May 12th, they were given honoured places on the platform and programme, and their reception by the very large audiences could not have been more cordial and sympathetic. It is therefore gratifying to be able to report that our British representatives made a great reputation for themselves by their wit and their wisdom, and certainly contributed to the striking success of the day's proceedings. The Tremont Temple, chosen for the latter, is capable of holding fully three thousand people, and its capacity was taxed to the uttermost by an eager, attentive, and most appreciative audience. Had the Centennial done none other than make possible "The Day" its organisers would have found therein ample justification.

Yet it was but one of many stimulating, crowded days. The Women's Alliance, the Laymen's League, the Sunday School Association, two ministerial organisations, were found opportunities of assembling themselves together. Likewise, the Fellowship of Social Justice was responsible for a largely attended meeting in the Arlington Street Church. On all these occasions the enthusiasm and inspiration were unmistakable.

Apart from these stated and arranged occasions, the headquarters of the American Unitarian Association in 25 Beacon Street proved a great rallying-ground and social centre. Tastefully decorated with flags and bunting, it made known to all and sundry who daily passed that busy centre of Boston's life, the importance of the centennial event. Delegates, adorned with bright blue badges, met the eye as one walked across Boston Common or passed along some important thoroughfare. All this helped in the work of publicity in which Americans are such past masters. The presence of the Mayor of Boston and the Governor of the Commonwealth brought our meetings into touch with the larger life of the community; while two leading representatives of other churches demonstrated the possibility and power of a wider spiritual fellowship.

Nothing could have exceeded the kindness and thoughtfulness of the organisers of the great series of events. These manifest and constant qualities showed themselves not only in the great Festival of the Friday in the Copley Plaza Hotel, but gave the keynote to all the proceedings. Without waiting for an introduction, friendly Americans came forward to any over-

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seas visitor and made the latter feel instantly at home. No trouble was too great to take to ensure his comfort, no limit was placed upon the measure of the proffered hospitality. The officials found time even amid their many duties to act as guides to the objects of interest in Boston and district, while a carefully planned Motor Tour made many visitors familiar with the historic and natural attractions of places like Concord and Lexington. Doubtless the splendid success of the Centennial gatherings provided the organisers with their most longed for reward, but in addition to that many visitors from other lands will hold them in most grateful recollection for innumerable acts of thoughtful kindness and consideration.

The Antrim Presbytery.

[The beginning of this enquiry was Rev. A. O. Ashworth's writing to me that there was a question whether the centennial of the Antrim Presbytery should date from 1725 or from 1726. He asked my opinion; this I did not give him. I gave him one or two extracts from the minutes of the General Synod of Ulster, and said that the answer to the question largely depended upon the view taken of the history of the body previous to those dates. I offered to give an oral address on this matter. The address was given on 5th March, 1925. What follows is revised from a very careful report kindly furnished by Rev. E. Lockett.]

The inception of the Presbytery of Antrim is closely connected with the local revival of 1626. It seems that in 1622 a graduate of St. Andrew's, James Glendinning (apparently a youthful and evidently an unbalanced evangelist), was appointed to the vicarage of Carnmoney. Here the church building was in ruins; the vicar got little revenue and had no opportunity of duty. Glendinning therefore took up his residence at Carrickfergus, and lectured there in the parish church. He was heard by Robert Blair, then minister of Bangor. Blair said there were "sparkles of good" in his discourse, but nothing solid. He told Glendinning that he was not fit to preach among the English Colonists, and advised him to exercise his gifts among those who were his own countrymen, for example at Oldstone. Glendinning took the hint; and though he did not cease to reside at Carrickfergus he visited regularly the parish of Oldstone, a couple of miles from Antrim, and held services there.

The chief man at Oldstone was one Hugh Campbell, who came over from Ayrshire because "he had killed a man." Glendinning converted him. With the ardour of a convert, Hugh Campbell summoned his neighbours to his house, on the **last** Friday in each month. A revival began, stimulated by Glendinning's preaching of "lawwrath and the terrors of God," attended with hysterical, extravagant, and physical outbursts, and perhaps with more noise than anything else. Indeed it was said of Glendinning by an eminent contemporary, that he "would never have been chosen by a wise assembly of ministers, nor sent to begin a reformation in this land."

The vicar of Antrim was one John Ridge, an Oxford man by birth, by education, and by his first ordination. He was ordained deacon by John Bridges, then Bishop of Oxford, an extreme high Anglican, maligned as Doctor of Devility in the Marprelate Tracts (1588). Ridge, though an Episcopalian, was no high churchman. He came over to Ireland, it is not known exactly why, and was ordained priest by Robert Echlin, Bishop of Down and Connor, who made him vicar of Antrim in 1619. In order to counteract the mischievous effects, both of Glendinning's one-sided preaching, and of the lay outbreaks in the revival, Ridge, then thirty years of age, organised in 1626 a meeting at Antrim on the **first** Friday of each month. He had, to begin with, three

ministerial coadjutors, Robert Blair, of Bangor, Robert Cunningham, of Holywood, and James Hamilton, then agent of the Clandeboye Estate. These four met at Antrim on the Thursday evening; two of them preached at Antrim on Friday forenoon; the other two on Friday afternoon. They spent the rest of their time in consultation on the state of religion in the district. By degrees they were joined by other clergy of like mind. The meeting was exclusively clerical. No lay elders were admitted. In fact at this time no one of the associated clergy could be definitely called Presbyterian. Whatever the theories of some of them, they were content, under Echlin's easy rule, to take their place with moderate Episcopalians. Their movement attracted attention across the water. A colony of English dissenters (Independents or Baptists) made their way to Antrim, with what results we do not know. If they expected to capture Ridge, they failed. Glendinning did not long remain in Ireland. In Scotland he obtained several temporary posts between 1647 and 1663, but apparently no permanent settlement.

The Antrim Meeting very soon became a meeting of Non-Subscribers, not, however to the Westminster Confession, which was still in the womb of time, but to the new Irish Canons of 1635. Echlin had been succeeded in 1636 by Henry Leslie, a different sort of man. He summoned six of the clergy concerned in the Antrim meetings, and found they would not subscribe to the new canons. Their objections were three-fold. The canons bound them (1) to use the whole of the Prayer Book; (2) to read lessons from the Apocrypha, which to their minds would be sheer profanity; (3) to administer the Eucharist to the people kneeling. Leslie suspended the whole six. He did not deprive them, but prohibited them from preaching until they would subscribe. Ridge at once went across to Scotland, and died there in the following year, 1637, perhaps at Irvine, Ayrshire, but the exact place and date of his death are to his descendants unknown.

The Antrim meeting, thus checked for a time, was not very long after resumed. It was resumed with a strong feeling against the Bishops, but with no active tendency towards a Presbyterian discipline, which came however, in the course of time. In 1642 was the first real Presbytery in this country, the Army Presbytery, which had considerable influence.

We find in 1671 and from that to 1675 that John Howe, the great representative of the later English Presbyterianism, was in Antrim, was a member of the Antrim Meeting, and could testify from the English point of view what John Livingstone had earlier asserted from his point of view, that the clerical conferences at Antrim were "sometimes as profitable as either Presbyteries or Synods" It was from observation of how things worked out in the Antrim Meeting that Howe developed in 1690 his scheme of Happy Union between Independents and Presbyterians in England. This Union was purely clerical; no lay element was included. Hence no jurisdiction was attempted, either in the Antrim Meeting or in the meeting of its London daughter, but only consultation with a view to the interests of religion.

Now, we come to the glorious, pious and immortal revolution, when for the first time in Ireland a Synod of the Presbyterian order was introduced. It first met in September, 1690. We have not the minutes of that meeting, but we have the minutes for the following year. (30th September, 1691). We find the Antrim Meeting as it is called (and it is also called in the same minutes the Antrim Presbytery) represented by 16 Clergymen, and with them some elders. Consequently, the Antrim Meeting had now decided to admit a lay element on Presbyterian lines. It was by far the largest of the sub-

ordinate bodies in the Ulster General Synod. Its full strength we learn from the minutes of 1694. We find that besides Antrim it included Belfast and towards the north-east it included Carrickfergus, Larne, Broadisland, Cairncastle, Connor, Ahoghill, Killead, Island Magee, Dunagore, Dunean, Braid, Templepatrick, Glenarm, Ballyclare; on the south-west it included Lisburn, Lurgan, and Moira. It even included one of the Congregations of Dublin, that of Bull Alley.

The importance of Antrim itself is obvious from the fact that the General Synod met at Antrim from 1690 to 1708, and again in 1715. In a certain sense we might say that Antrim was more important as an ecclesiastical centre than Belfast. That was because, owing to its original constitution and aim, the Presbytery of Antrim was at one with the English Presbyterians, and further because the minister of Antrim was on excellent terms with the parish minister. Indeed the Antrim congregation regularly met for one of its services in the Parish Church, and its services were (and continued to be within living memory) on the English model, beginning not with singing but with prayer. In Belfast the contrary was the case. The English Presbyterian congregation worshipping in the old Castle under Emlyn, was in very friendly relations with the Episcopal Church and its minister, but had no dealings whatever with the Irish Presbyterian congregation in North Street.

The General Synod decided that this huge Presbytery of Antrim must be divided. In 1697, it was divided. One portion was constituted as the Presbytery of Belfast. The other section—including Antrim with Larne, Cairncastle, Glenarm, Ballyclare, Dunagore, Dunean, Ahoghill, Ballymena, Braid, Ballyeaston, Connor—was not called the Antrim Presbytery, but the Presbytery of Connor. Why? Apparently there were two reasons: first, the desire to banish the memory of the Non-Presbyterian Antrim Meetings; secondly, the fact that at Connor the clergyman was Charles Masterton, an admirable exponent of the conservative theology and the Presbyterian discipline of his period. Whatever the Synod wanted to do, the change of name did not in fact come about, and it is only in the minutes of 1697 that any reference to this Presbytery as the Presbytery of Connor is to be found. A further indication of the spirit which prevailed to rend the old Antrim Meeting in twain, is seen in the attempt to put these two Presbyteries, Belfast and Connor, into two different Sub-Synods. The Connor Section was put into the Sub-Synod of Coleraine; the Belfast Section into the Sub-Synod of Belfast. Yet the Synod was not able to carry this out. When a Synod meets, it is an open court, and as a matter of fact the persevering members of the Connor section put in an attendance at the Sub-Synod of Belfast, and were asked to sit and deliberate, so that in 1702, when a third Sub-Synod was brought into being, the Sub-Synod of Belfast was re-constituted to contain the Antrim, Down and Belfast Presbyteries.

Suppose we pass on from 1702, remembering that this was also the year in which Thomas Emlyn published the work, on the strength of which he was convicted at Dublin of blasphemy, in regard to his views of the Person of Our Lord. In 1703, the date of Emlyn's conviction, a very important event in the history of the Antrim Presbytery took place—the appointment of John Abernethy, the younger, as minister of Antrim. In 1705, two things occurred, each of which had a connection with the fact that Emlyn's period of imprisonment ended in that year. One was the extension of the demand for subscription to the Westminster Confession. In 1698 that demand had only been made on licentiates. It was in 1705 made a condition not

only of licence, but also of ordination and installation. In that same year, 1705, Abernethy founded the Belfast Society. It might just as well have been named—from the place of abode of its founder, and from its order of proceedings, and the principles it fostered—the Antrim Society; for it was in effect a revival of the Antrim Meeting under altered conditions. Ministers who were in sympathy with the principles of the Antrim Meeting whether in that Presbytery, or in the Belfast Presbytery, or in the Presbytery of Down, met together in Belfast. They did not, like the men of 1626, indulge in four sermons a day, but they met to preach and to listen to a sermon, and to consult together, not exclusively about the state of religion, yet especially about the state of Biblical knowledge and theological thought. Events were happening which brought the researches of this Belfast Society very much forward in prominence and importance. In 1712 was published the famous treatise on the "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity" by Dr. Samuel Clarke. That found its way early to Ireland, and, though it did not meet with much acceptance, it stirred thinking minds, and prepared for further research into theological topics. The Synod seems to have been getting rather frightened, for when in 1718 an invitation to Abernethy came from Dublin, the Synod told him to go to Dublin. Abernethy did not go.

The next year (1719), there came for the first time to Presbyterian Ireland the Statute of Toleration. It is often forgotten that though toleration came across the water, as early as 1689, it did not come here until 1719. Though it came late, it came without any demand for a subscription. It is said, and on what seems good authority, that it was George I. himself who struck out of the draft Bill the demand for subscription to the Westminister Confession, with the remark—"They know not what they would be at. They shall have a toleration without a subscription." William III. a strong Calvinist, was likely to look favourably upon subscription. George I. was a Lutheran, not wedded to the Dutch ideal of religious order.

Also in the same year, 1719, there occurred the Salters' Hall Conference in London on subscription to non-Biblical formularies for expressing the doctrine of the Trinity—the conference at which a satirical spectator, (Sir Joseph Jekyll) remarked, "The Bible has it by four." These matters no doubt were calculated to make people think deeply respecting the terms of theological co-operation. At the end of this year (1719), on the 9th December, which was a Wednesday, John Abernethy preached a memorable sermon, which was published in 1720, under the title, "Religious Obedience founded on Personal Persuasion." His point was that the Church has no authority except to persuade people to follow the mind of Christ. That puts it in a nut-shell. John Malcolme, minister of Dunmurry, very soon came out with a reply to Abernethy, and in the introduction he coined a phrase, which is still pretty well-known, when he said "a set of men, by preaching and printing, pretend to give **new light** to the world by putting personal persuasion in the room of a church government," We often think that when "new light" was first spoken of, it meant new doctrine, but it meant a new idea of the function of church **discipline.**

The controversy between Abernethy and Malcolme led the Synod to pass in 1720, what it called a Pacific Act, *i.e.* reverting to the Act of 1705, and continuing to call for subscription, it added that should any phrase in the Westminster Confession be unacceptable to the candidate, the candidate was at liberty to use "his own expressions," provided the expressions came within the limits of "soundness in the Faith." That was in June, 1720. In the following month (28th July), Samuel Halliday, who had been recommended in the June Synod to First

Belfast, appeared before the Belfast Presbytery for installation. Halliday did not avail himself of the Pacific Act. He declined to subscribe at all to anything in the nature of human tests. If it had been the Bible, he would have done otherwise. He said he took this line, not that he had at all altered his views since the time when at his licence he had subscribed, but because he was now convinced that it was wrong to put any human formulary in the authoritative place, demanded by the Pacific Act; though he owned that the Westminster Confession contains "all the essential articles of the Christian Doctrine." There was obviously a subtle meaning in the reference to "essential articles," for, next year, Halliday intimated pretty plainly to the Synod that, in his judgment, the Westminster Confession contained also "a great number of extra-essential points." We gather that his objection to subscribe was not simply one of principle, but also had regard to the nature of the matter which he was called upon to subscribe. Hence there is nothing to be said against Halliday's position in throwing overboard the Pacific Act. He had no hand in its enactment. On the other hand it is not easy to defend the Belfast Presbytery when they proceeded to instal Halliday in defiance of that Act. However, it was a delicate matter, and the Synod in the following year (1721) found it so, when they debated it. What were they to do? They could not uninstall Halliday. They could hardly judge the installation invalid. What penalty ought they to inflict on the Presbytery? At last one member suggested—"Suppose we drop it?" and drop it they did.

There was, following this, what we may judge to have been, on the part of the Synod, a very genuine idea of conciliation, although none of the Non-subscribers took it that way. The Synod offered a Voluntary Subscription to the Westminster Confession, "as founded on the Word of God." They hoped that men like Halliday, from what he had stated as his own belief as to the contents of the Confession, might subscribe in that fashion. Eight members of the Antrim Presbytery did subscribe, but no one of these is known to have been in sympathy with Abernethy and Halliday.

There now came forward (in 1724), the awkward business of Thomas Nevin of Downpatrick. In a local discussion which might be called futile at best, Nevin had expressed the opinion that, though a sin, it was not blasphemy in a Jew to deny the deity of Christ. He was brought before the Synod and tried on the charge of condoning Jewish blasphemy. In the course of the trial, the Synod quite inadvisedly asked him whether he held the deity of Christ. They were trying him on quite another charge, and it was their business to state and prove their case against him, if they impugned his own belief. To ask him to save them the trouble of collecting evidence was wrong. At the same time Nevin was unwise in simply refusing to answer the question. The question was an oblique charge; he should have claimed to be confronted with the charge direct, and tried on that issue. His refusal was treated as insubordination. Nevin was bowed out, not deposed, not excommunicated, but simply removed from the jurisdiction of the Synod.

These events gave the Synod cause to think that it would be advisable to get together, into one Presbytery, those who held with Abernethy or Halliday; because in this Presbytery and that, and the other, there were quarrels getting up. Instead of the proper business being attended to, the members were debating current points of difference. The Synod thought it would be well to put those who wanted to raise such questions together, and let them quarrel among themselves if they liked, and not disturb the general course of the Church. What they did (it is quite in point in

regard to the question of the centennial) was to undo the work of the old Synod of 1697. On the afternoon of 24th June, 1725, they took, from Antrim Presbytery, six ministers, namely, John Abernethy (Antrim), Thomas Wilson (Ballyclare), John Henderson (Dunean), Thomas Shaw (Ahoghill), Josias Clugston (Larne), William Taylor, junr. (Cairncastle). From Belfast Presbytery they took four ministers, namely Michael Bruce (Holywood), James Kirkpatrick (Second Belfast), Samuel Halliday (First Belfast), Samuel Harpur (Moira). From Down Presbytery they took one minister, namely, John Mears (Newtownards). These eleven were to constitute henceforth the Antrim Presbytery, which was still, however, part and parcel of the General Synod, and under its jurisdiction.

In addition to the eleven, there were three other ministers, who were allowed an option, either to join the Antrim Presbytery, or to stay where they were. Only one of them at once signified that his option was to join the Antrim Presbytery, and that was John Orr, of Comber (Down Presbytery), and when he went home, his loving flock closed the Meeting House against him. John Orr soon after conformed; later he became Archdeacon of Ferns. This fate of Orr of Comber prevented either of the other two from immediately exercising the option. For the time they stayed where they were.

What did the Antrim Presbytery of 1725 do? They drew up what they termed a "First Expedient for Peace." Note what that meant. It meant that before there could be peace in the Synod, so far as they could determine the matter, this expedient must be adopted. They came to the Synod of 1726, with this First Expedient for Peace. What did it say? It consisted of six propositions. The points which really touched upon the principles of the controversy were—(1) That there is no legitimate legislation in the Christian Church apart from what they called "the invariable laws of Jesus Christ our Saviour," and that members of a religious organisation, being uninspired men, with no authority delegated to them by Christ, have no right or power to legislate at all. (2) Then, again, they said that the Westminster Confession, being an uninspired document, any order to take it as a Standard of Christian Truth, was null and void. Still they stated that the Westminster Confession was "a good summary of the main heads of the Christian Doctrine." It was not at all surprising, this being the First Expedient for Peace, that when it was presented to the Synod of 1726, the Synod said—"They put it out of our power to maintain ministerial communion with them in Church judicatories as formerly." That was the resolution of the Synod of June 24th, 1726, confirmed on the 26th and again on the 28th June. On that last date the Regium Donum was confirmed to the Presbytery of Antrim, and the Synod withdrew from that Presbytery. It was the Synod that withdrew, leaving the Antrim Presbytery high and dry. That is to say, in 1726, the Synod placed the Antrim Presbytery in the same position of independence which had characterised the Antrim Meeting.

In this its position of independence, the Presbytery of Antrim at once assumed Synodical Rights. One of the first things it did, after the Synod of 1726, was to admit as one of its members, Nevin of Downpatrick. This was not an act which a Presbytery can do. That must be done, not by, but for a Presbytery. The Antrim Presbytery from 1726, consistently claimed not merely Presbyterial, but also Synodical Rights. The next thing was that, in the course of the same year, Dundalk with its minister (Patrick Simson, Armagh Presbytery), exercised its option in favour of the Antrim Presbytery, and was accepted. The third clergyman, John Elder, of Aghadowey (Coleraine Presbytery), with whom the option was left, came

in later in 1728. The conclusion appears to be that the Antrim Presbytery, as a separated and self-acting body, dates not from 1725, but from 1726, which, again, is the tercentennial of the Antrim Meeting.

There is not much more to be said, from the present point of view, about the Antrim Presbytery. In 1751 the Antrim Presbytery took part in the General Synod by commission. In 1754 the Antrim Presbytery took part in the General Synod as again part and parcel of it. This, however, was only *pro tem.* and due to arrangements in regard to the Widows' Fund (originated in 1750, by William Bruce a Dublin layman and non-Subscriber). These are the only two occasions of corporate co-operation since the separation. Meanwhile there had been very considerable coming and going between the General Synod and this Presbytery. There had been no excommunication of the members of the Antrim Presbytery, hence their ministers constantly joined with ministers of the General Synod at communions. As time went on the differences between the members of this Presbytery and many other Presbyteries, were reduced almost to insignificance. Indeed, in 1805 negotiations were set on foot for the return of the Antrim Presbytery to the bosom of the General Synod. That these negotiations were defeated was largely due to the unfavourable attitude of Dr. Bruce.

A.G.

The Business Agent, the Rev. G J. Slipper, earnestly asks for the early payment of all outstanding accounts for the Magazine. Some of these are now considerably over-due, and it would greatly facilitate the balancing of the accounts if prompt payment were the practice.

Our Annual Meetings.

The above passed off very satisfactorily, favoured by a continuance of fine summer weather.

Certain alterations were made in the hope of securing better attendances.

These rvice usually held on the Tuesday evening was arranged, through the kindness of the Committee of the First Presbyterian Church, for the Sunday Evening, June 14th. Although called a United Service it was not so in fact, since all the other Belfast Congregations held their services at the same time. This was not due to any unwillingness on their part to join in a united effort but owing to lack of promptness and thoroughness on the side of the organisers. Congregational arrangements cannot be changed at the eleventh hour and if the experiment of a Sunday United Service is repeated next year it will be desirable to take steps for it much earlier. As it was, Dr. Wilbur had a fair congregation to listen to his very thoughtful sermon, his appearance in the place of the Rev. S. E. Bowen, the retiring Moderator, being due to the latter. As the Committee of the First Church generously allowed the collection to go to the Incidental Fund, the latter profited by the new arrangement.

Speaking of collections at these annual gatherings we are of opinion that it was mistaken judgment and bad policy which were responsible for three collections on successive nights, two of these being for the Incidental Fund. Just as we depend upon the same people for our audiences so apparently we must exact from them our financial contributions. This is not only unfair in principle but decidedly unsound in policy. It creates a bad impression upon the general public when the press announcements have the inevitable intimation : a collection for this object or that will be taken up. That is not the way to ensure good and representative attendances.

Mention has already been made of Dr. Wilbur's appearance at the service

on the Sunday. He rendered other much appreciated services during his welcome visit to Belfast. On the Monday he spoke most acceptably on "Religous Faith: Its Nature and Value." Both the ideas and their treatment proclaimed a man of deep spiritual experience. His fellow-speaker at the meeting was the Rev. H. J. Rossington, whose optimistic pronuncement on "The Prospects of Liberal Religion" evoked a ready response.

The Annual Lecture delivered by Dr. Wilbur on "The Lessons and Meaning of Unitarian History," was as timely as it was valuable. It gave a most clear and well-informed guidance to the development of Unitarian views at home and abroad, and the searching pertinent questions with which it closed are deserving of the most sympathetic consideration. The Rev. S. E. Bowen, who presided, expressed all our feelings when he said that such a lecture ought to be published. That feeling was also evoked by the delivery of the lecture earlier in Liverpool and we found that Dr. Wilbur had consented to the publication of his lecture. When, therefore, it appears in separate published form, steps will be taken to have copies provided for readers in the North of Ireland.

We were sorry that so few were present at the Communion Service on the Wednesday morning. Never very satisfactory in this respect, the attendance then was about the smallest we have seen. Really such a devotional beginning might mean much to the ordinary Meetings of our General Synod. If the time is inconvenient it should be altered; if not that, it behoves more of our people to manifest a greater measure of zeal and self-sacrifice in the matter of attendance. It is a most valuable opportunity unutilised for the highest ends.

The General Synod passed off pretty much as usual. There was the customary want of perspective in the matter of debate. Matters of relative unimportance called forth the most eloquence; while some things vital to our church life were merely formal in their presentment. If irrelevant details could be ruled out by some speakers, and the art of compression acquired by others, the general advantage would be greatly furthered. We are not criticising the newly-appointed Moderator, since his only fault was a large-hearted toleration when his judgment desired to cut-off the oratorical flow of untimely utterance. His conduct in the chair was admirable and a happy augury for his year of office, in which we wish him all success and happiness.

The Annual Dinner was a pleasant function. Dr. Wilbur's response to his health further strengthened his claims to our indebtedness as well as our feelings of liking and admiration. We consider the California School for the Ministry singularly fortunate in the possession of a head so intellectual in his equipment and so spiritual in his point-of-view.

It was unfortunate that the Meeting promoted by the Centenary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association came at the close of the proceedings when many persons had begun their journey homewards. The consequence was a much smaller attendance than befitted both the occasion and the standard of the speaking. All the speeches were pertinent, pointed, and much appreciated by those present. Mrs. Davies more than justified the choice of a lady speaker amongst an otherwise exclusively male group of contributors.

Social Service Club.

Juniors Older Than Seniors.

There was a crowded attendance in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, on Wednesday evening, 27th May, when the Social Service Club held its annual display.

The Club is again to be warmly congratulated on its successes in recent contests whether in the Belfast Musical competitions where the Junior Club topped the list and the Seniors

came second, or in the Club Union Competitions, when the Seniors took first place in cooking, crochet, and knitting and second place in drill, while the juniors beat all competitors in needlework, embroidery, elocution, folk dancing (with 100 per cent.) and knitting, coming out second in drill. Such results cannot be achieved without an amount of hard work on the part of both girls and teachers, not forgetting the unremitting care that must be exercised by Miss Montgomery as Club leader. She has been fortunate in getting round her such an excellent staff of teachers as Mrs. Johnston (needlework), Mrs. E. R. Jackson (elocution), Miss M. Patterson (play centre), Miss V. Donaldson (junior singing), Miss A. Coulter (senior singing) and Miss M. Campbell (folk dancing and drill), while she herself teaches the cookery besides being responsible for the general oversight of the Club.

Mrs. James Moore presided at the display and the prizes were distributed by Miss Hutton. These consisted of 21 book prizes, generously presented by Mr. R. M. Laird, and three special prizes for good attendance (44 out of 45), kindly given by Miss Ana Montgomery and a special book prize from Miss J. Bruce for the most efficient Junior girl, won by ballot among her club-mates by Miss Nellie Fluke.

An excellent programe had been arranged. Both senior and junior teams gave some fine displays of drilling and folk-dancing, and, while the junior choir contributed "The Fox and the Grapes," a highly popular item, the seniors were loudly applauded for the prize-winning song, "The Meeting of the Waters." They also sang, "It was a Lover and His Lass." The Playcentre Club—all tiny tots—brought one back to fairyland with their happy interpretation of "Cinderella," and they were also loudly encored for their "Clap Dance." Junior members gave some enjoyable recitations, and the "Ring Scene" from "The Merchant of Venice" showed how carefully they have been trained. "The Shepherd Boy," a charming playlet, concluded the programme.

Miss Hutton, who has much experience in connection with the Alexandra Girls' Working Club in Dublin, in handing over the prizes, said she felt honoured in being asked to do so. She congratulated Miss Montgomery and her assistants, and the girls themselves on their efforts. Her description of the work in the Dublin Clubs was very interesting, and on comparing Dublin with Belfast, she thought that Belfast gets more results in the way of cups and prizes than Dublin Clubs do. In learning some of the history of the Social Service Club from Miss Montgomery, it transpired that the junior club was two years older than the senior club—the Junior Club being five years old, the seniors only three. This rather complex arrangement greatly amused Miss Hutton, who called it "our delightful Irish way of inverting orders," afterwards insisting on referring to the juniors as "these old juniors."

It was, thanks to a subscription from Mr. Eustace Gordon, who asked that it might be spent as the club wished, that Social Service enjoyed an outing to Cairncastle. Unfortunately the rain came down in torrents, but a schoolroom had been secured, and after tea, games and an impromptu concert were substituted for outdoor amusements. Members declared that they enjoyed themselves very much in spite of the rain, certainly nothing was left undone by the promoters to make the afternoon a success.

The London Centennial.

We were glad to see the North of Ireland so well represented at the British and Foreign Unitarian Association Centennial Celebrations. The occasion was important, and the proceedings successful and inspiring. Naturally there was a much larger at-

tendance of persons than is customary at the Whit-week Meetings. Many centres of our Unitarian Constituency had been creating local interest in the great event, and this served to increase the desire to participate in the actual meetings.

It was a great experience to be at the service in the beautiful old Dutch Church, Austin Friars. As befitted the occasion, Great Britain and America were brought together in the officiating clergymen, the Rev. J. H. Weatherall being the preacher, and Dr. Snow read the lessons. A united choir gave a splendid lead to the hymns, while the organist was fully adequate to the occasion. Rarely have we heard heartier and more tuneful congregational singing than we did at this service. Mr Weatherall's sermon gave us what we all hoped and expected—not merely an appreciative reference to past achievements but a challenge and a call to further manifestations of loyalty and self-sacrifice.

The public meeting in the Caxton Hall was a worthy climax to the day's proceedings which had included very thoughtful addresses on "Religion and Education" and "Religion and Social Work" submitted by Miss Alice Haigh and the Rev. Alfred Hall. The President's Luncheon proved a very pleasant interlude between the morning session and the crowded evening meeting. The latter brought together four very capable and representative speakers. two being ministerial and two laymen. Dr. Jacks made his topic "The Call of Truth," provocative and stimulating; the Rev. W. G. Tarrant recalled in fitting phrase the personalities of the past; Mr. Sydney Jones had a pregnant message for "The Living Present," while Mr. P. M. Oliver in a short but telling utterance disclosed the "Visions of the Future."

The eagerly anticipated Essex Hall Lecture by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith was not wholly satisfactory. "Free Thought in the Nineteenth Century," by its exclusion of our paramount interest, religious thought, seemed somewhat thin, while the delivery of the lecture left much to be desired. We are afraid that many of the crowded visitors had to take much as read and were unable to hear. Those unable to get admission into the packed hall might find consolation in the experience of friends present.

The Conversazione the same evening attracted a very large attendance and it was exceedingly pleasant to see such a number of friends from far and near, amongst the former being American representatives and delegates. It was a good thing to cater for the younger persons by means of dancing and we anticipate a larger turn-out of such in future years if that feature becomes permanent. Certainly the Channing House girls would so plan.

The Need for an Adventurous Church.

[This Address was given by the Rev. L. J. Hines, of Halifax, at the Annual Meeting of the Ulster Unitarian Christian Association, on May 18th. As a request for its reproduction in our columns was expressed, we gladly accede thereto.]

It is my privilege to address this Assembly as it approaches the threshold of its Jubilee. When next you meet you will have completed the history of fifty years. I am also reminded of the fact that our Meeting to-day stands in near approach to the Centenary Celebrations of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, an institution which in its inception was the direct outcome of the great heroic adventure of our distant spiritual ancestry.

We gather therefore on this occasion under the dual light of two great traditional influences, both of which must have profound effect upon our thoughts.

I cannot help but feel that the occasion calls for a message that in

some way touches the life of our own churches at the point of their supreme need.

If we heed the approaching landmarks in our history we shall awake to a grateful consciousness of our heritage and we shall regard with renewed seriousness and devotion the trust which has been placed upon us.

Judged in the light of the passing years, the work and service of our fathers in the faith was supremely heroic and adventurous. "They had tasted the powers and possibilities of the age to come," and they were patriots of a day not yet arrived.

They pushed as far as their finger tips could touch the causes upon which they had set their hearts; then to our hands they passed the touch of faith and adventure. If we fail, then they fail as builders do, who have laid broad foundations yet are followed by a people who forget their plans and neglect their tasks.

The past is calling us to a religious enterprise of adventurous faith and service and even though we remain unmindful of our traditional obligations there is yet one other voice, nearer and even more insistent, a voice demanding the same heroic spirit in us which our forefathers manifested—it is the voice of the world's present need.

We stand to-day confronted by a world's need for a new adventurous church; a church that in the power of its vision, in the depth of its sacrifice, and in the passion of its service, will bring back hope, faith and life to a bruised, perplexed and distracted humanity.

I need spend little time to-day in an attempt to convince you that of all the ills from which the churches are suffering **the absence of the heroic adventurous spirit is our supreme defect.** A well-known chaplain of army days has recently expressed the conviction that the real trouble with the modern church is this **"she has never been over the top."**

Every soldier will understand the nature of the reproach. It implies that there are no marks of conflict upon us, no dust of battle, no wounds or blood. Our standards are pretty and clean and untattered. We are at ease in Zion in the midst of a world that has bought its life and liberty in struggle and in pain.

We appear to have completely forgotten the essential nature of our mission. We have lost sight of what the church stands for, or if we have not forgotten then we have grown impotent and lost all power to rise to our high calling of God.

The spirit of adventure has forsaken us and without it we are utterly incapable of serving man in his highest needs and deepest extremities.

In view of our lost courage and zeal the disregard of the world for the church, which is a marked feature of modern times, is easily understood.

"We have learned," says Herrmann **"that there are things more precious than complacency: that to live for one's self and one's own safety isn't a man's life at all. We want a church that will lead the way in courage and unselfishness."**

This is what the modern world is demanding and this is what the modern church by reason of its institutional selfishness and its self-indulgent ease and lethargy, is unable to supply.

By our loss of the heroic spirit we have counted ourselves out and have no right to be regarded as a spiritual or social redemptive agency in the world.

The challenge of the new century to a group of churches founded upon the heroic spirit is clear and unmistakable. **Recover the lost spirit of adventure and inscribe a new chapter in the World's History of Spiritual Progress,** or rot in your self-complacency and die even as other institutions have passed out when the breath of purpose has gone from them.

It is only the coward soul who will accept the latter possibility. In spite of all our weaknesses there is stern stuff in most of our people, and providing we can be shaken and awaken-

ed and made aware of the fact that the fight implies existence or extinction we shall yet arise from our sleep and make answer to the world's challenge and the world's need in a prophecy and a faith and a service comparable with the great Christian adventures of the past.

One wishes that the deadly importance of the situation had been more clearly declared by our leaders who know in their own hearts and who discuss behind closed doors the seriousness of the issue that confronts us.

Let us be frank about this matter. We have forsaken our trust and lost the confidence of our fellows. We must recapture our sincerity, our passion, our heroism if we are to merit a future existence.

To us who are the enfeebled Knights of the Holy Grail, some Parsifal must come bringing back salvation, purity, and purposes of love to us, calling us again to the life-saving and life-giving ministeries to which we have been called.

This year of celebration will no doubt be fruitful of many schemes and plans and projects for the recovery of our lost vitality and the strengthening of that which remains.

To my mind there is only one project that really matters; only one which will count for anything in face of the great issue.

It may be stated thus—**Our world calls for a church of adventure and the call can only be answered by the intensive cultivation of Heroic Discipleship.**

If this is impossible to us then all else is impossible. The future of religion is the hands of those churches who at all costs and to the exclusion of all else can inspire their people to make a great adventure of faith and surrender their ease for a new perilous pilgrimage.

What is the prospect as far as our people are concerned?

It would seem to me that before there can be any expression of adventurous discipleship amongst us we have a few high barriers to sweep away.

1. There is the Barrier which we will call Habit.

Christianity to-day to many of us who profess it is no more than a formality. It has become one of our life's decent conventions. But the real possibilities of religion either for ourselves or for others have never laid hold of us. **"We're praising God on Sunday. We'll be all right on Monday. It's just a little habit we've acquired."** But it is not the kind of habit that produces adventurous discipleship. It is not the stuff out of which Saints and Martyrs are made. It is a sedative and not a stimulus. It is a substitution for, rather than an inspiration to, heroic adventure.

2. There is a barrier which we will call indifference.

This is perhaps the greatest obstacle confronting us. It is no use blinding our eyes to the fact that many of our people are not keen on the things that really matter. They bear honoured names among us. They have been brought up in our faith, but they are indifferent to the high claims which their faith makes upon them. They resist all calls to the committals of adventurous discipleship.

3. There is the barrier which we will call Pessimism.

It has been erected by those perfectly sincere, but misguided souls who have preached the little Church Gospel in our midst for so many years. They have self-condemned our churches to weakness and timidity, and repressed the passions of men and women whose vision and faith made them unafraid.

A youth who is now a professor of Harvard once sought the presence of Phillips Brooks. He was in despair but when he came away he said **"I have discovered that what I really needed was not the solution of my difficulties, but the contagion of a triumphant spirit."**

It is this contagion which we need in our Churches before we can hope for or expect the evidence of adventurous discipleship.

But suppose a new spirit could descend upon us ; new, that is, to our experience, yet not new to the world. The spirit that inspired the early church. The spirit that our forefathers shared in no small measure.

Suppose it came to us also and our barriers gave way before it as before an incoming tide.

Then we should be eager to discover the way in which an adventurous discipleship could be best expressed in our own days, and the cry of our modern world most effectively answered.

The quest, I imagine, would bring this truth home to us ; that serving our God and following Jesus Christ in these days does not primarily imply an engagement in all manner of benificent and uplifting activities of a humanitarian nature.

An attempt to define discipleship solely in such terms as " social service " has been tried and has failed. This may be part but it is not the first part of adventurous discipleship to-day. You cannot reduce your obligation to the mere duty of " doing your bit."

God's call upon us is not at first upon our time, our money, or our service ; these things will follow. The highest call is upon ourselves ; upon our consecrated personalities.

The early stage of the heroic adventure is a lonely business. It is personal spiritual quest and ends in a personal spiritual surrender.

Legend says that the parent bird takes the eglets to the rocks and holds their heads to the sun. If they can endure the blaze without blinking they are regarded as true to the eagle race ; if they wince or close their eyes they are dropped over the abyss.

Adventurous service implies courage to bear the light, to relinquish every task and every desire which unfits us for a sustained gaze into the face of God, who is our very life.

The world demands many things from our feeble churches, but its deepest, though often inarticulate cry is for men who have seen God on the mount.

Are we brave enough to leave the market place and enter the Holy of Holies that we may sanctify ourselves for the world's sake ?

The social expression of our discipleship can be expected as a natural sequence to this first spiritual adventure, but not until we have looked again into the face of God can we look again with hope and love into the faces of our fellow men.

The future of the churches and the hope of the world is centered in this need for a new spiritual awakening.

One looks for the signs of its coming among us but the signs are not clearly visible ; yet with that same optimism which has characterised all the struggle of our past history we trust and wait ; believing that our little group of churches will somehow rise to the high claims of the age, and live in newness of life to play a worthy and heroic part in world betterment and progress.

This matter rests very largely with the younger people of our Churches. It is upon them that the great responsibility rests. The great heritage of the past of which so many of them seem unmindful must become their glory and their inspiration : **" No, we have no Sunday-School, but we have a fine graveyard."** I can tell you a better story than that. It is a classic story of John Bunyan: **" This woman,"** said Greatheart to Gaius, **" is the wife of one Christian, a pilgrim of former times, and these are his four children and, if they see any place where the old pilgrim hath lain, or any print of his foot, it ministereth joy to their hearts, and they covet to lie or tread in the same."**

That is the sort of thing we want. That is the kind of challenge we must utter. Elijah is dead—we must call for an Elisha. Moses is dead, we must find a young Joshua. Let us dare our young people by the graves of their sires to answer the call of the ages.

I have returned to Ulster this week-end with vivid recollections of experiences shared down there at the mouth of the Lough during the grim days of war. You all know what

happened, how the quiet harbour o Larne was packed by men and tiny ships entrusted with the safe keeping of the North Channel convoys. You remember how those small ships served when the giant vessels floundered and how, when the danger was passed and the victory won, it was to the Trawler and the Drifter that the chief honour belonged.

I have an idea that our own small churches are being called upon for some such service in the spiritual needs of the present hour. The great ships of church and state are floundering in the darkness. If only we have the courage to put out to sea, to us may yet belong no small part of the joy of bringing a perplexed and chartless humanity to the safe anchorage of faith in the morning light of the future's newborn day.

Such service and such joy can only come to those who hear the call to adventurous discipleship—It can be ours only in so far as we may be prepared "**to give and not to count the cost—to fight and not to heed the wounds—to toil and not to seek for rest—to labour and to look for no reward.**"

Bodel-Mackenzie Benevolent Fund

The Trustees have pleasure in announcing that there will be an election of Beneficiaries at the quarterly meeting to be held on Thursday, September 10th, 1925.

The Fund enables the Trustees to make grants not exceeding £20, per annum, to Spinsters of 55 years and upwards, who are in reduced and poor circumstances, and who have been for at least five years prior to date of application members of a church connected with the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and other Free Christians.

Application Forms can be obtained up to August 30th for the September election, by applying to the Assistant Secretary—Rev. M. Watkins,

4 Bathgate Drive,
Strandtown, Belfast.

As Others See Us.

The following letter sent from Belfast, by the Rev. Sydney B. Snow, pastor of the Church of the Messiah, and printed in the *Montreal Herald*, on May 12th, will be read with interest.

"Here I am in Ireland, mother, in a sense, of our church in Montreal, and I have fallen in love with the land. I arrived last Thursday morning, after a passage which I regard as the final (and successful) test of my quality as a sailor. Belfast of course, is a modern industrial city, and wherever they are such cities are all alike, but on Friday I went to Downpatrick, an ancient town about an hour's journey away, and began to taste the flavour of old Ireland. The minister of our church, in clerical garb, with shovel hat, met me at the station, and we walked through narrow hilly streets to the church founded 1650; present building erected 1710. All along the way the men pulled off their hats to him. The service was to begin at once, and we went into the vestry and up a steep flight of stairs to the minister's room. From the window I could see the people coming through the grave-yard to the church. At the time for service the minister led me to a little door that I took for entrance to a cupboard, put me through it and charged me to lock myself in. There I was, in a high pulpit hung on the wall, looking down at the congregation. A hinged board in the jamb made me a narrow seat, with the door, which I was careful to bolt securely, for a back. There was supper afterwards at the house of the banker of the town, and a warm bed in another hospitable dwelling.

"Next morning my host perched me on the side of a jaunting car and we visited the old cathedral and the ruins of an ancient abbey. We drove through a sweet country-side, rolling and well-watered like many parts of New England, and the stone walls (ditches they call them here) separating the fields made one feel quite at home.

The blackthorns and the gorse were in bloom, and in a gentleman's place through which we drove the rhododendrons were begining to flower. By the roadside, in favoured spots, the ground was pale yellow with primroses. But the principal remembrance is the vivid green of the fields. In the streams and inlets, ideal for breeding, were various kinds of wild ducks and swans in teeming numbers.

"The Abbey ruins, almost a thousand years old, lay by a stream at the bottom of a sunny hillside. Near them down a yew bordered way that seemed itself like the dark entrance to a tomb lay a burying-ground. The Cathedral (Anglican) is of course of a later period, and suffered a restoration during the last century. It is one of three in the combined diocese of Down and Connor and Dromore ; the bishop's main seat is the modern cathedral in Belfast. Its interior is interesting because fitted in mid-Victorian manner for a very plain service. In the church yard lies a great flat stone, with a Celtic cross and "Patrick" carved upon its surface. Here, tradition says, St. Patrick was buried ; and until the stone was placed upon the spot, the sexton was kept busy filling in the grave to replace the earth which pilgrims carried away. As one approaches the town the Cathedral crowning a green hill, with a lake below it, is a brave and lovely sight.

"My first meeting with our Irish brethren was on Thursday evening, in the old 'First House' in Belfast. I had to rub my eyes when I saw the signboard at the entrance: First Presbyterian Church. It was founded in 1642 ; the present interesting and beautiful building, oval in shape, was erected in 1783. Until recently the Second House stood behind it ; the two congregations entered their separate houses for worship practically by one gate. About two centuries ago when the First Church increased in size, instead of enlarging the building the people divided and built another on the same plot of ground. In 1896 the Second Congregation, built a lovely stone gothic church naming it All Souls in another section of the city.

"The meeting Thursday evening was an open meeting of the Laymen's League which seems to have taken stronger hold in Belfast than in other British Unitarian centres. I spoke, by request, on the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy in America.

"I preached twice in the same House yesterday, to a good congregation in the morning and to double the number—almost a full church in the evening. In the afternoon I preached at Greyabbey a village sixteen miles out of Belfast, past the great estate of Lord Londonderry. Here the little church (founded 1753) was crowded ; and when the people sang the hymns, six in number, I realised what it really means to praise the Lord in song. I had my dinner with a farmer, and his three daughters and three of his sons ; the older son is a Unitarian minister settled in England. Behind the roomy house lie flat and peaceful fields, running to the shores of the Lough, here this godfearing family, son succeeding father, has tilled the land for more than three hundred years. I never quite knew before what it means to be rooted in the soil, and it is hard to think of a more happy life. Some of our people in Montreal may remember, a year or two ago, a young officer of a British merchant ship who came for a few Sundays to Church. He was the son of the minister of Greyabbey.

Obituary.

DR. GAWIN ORR.

The death of Dr. Gawin Orr, M.D., which occurred at his residence, Ballylesson, on Monday, the 18th May, will cause deep regret to a wide circle of friends in Belfast and throughout the Province, for he was one of the most kindly and genial of men, and

was held in high esteem by all who knew him. Dr. Orr, who was born on 28th September, 1839, and thus was in his eighty-sixth year, served his apprenticeship to a chemist in Downpatrick. After attaining his medical standing, he was appointed in 1864 the Dispensary Medical Officer of the Ballylesson district, and was beloved by the inhabitants of that area. Owing to failing strength he retired from this position, which he had held for over 44 years. In politics Dr. Orr was a Liberal of the old school, and being a tenant farmer himself he came into prominence when the Tenant Rights movement was at its height in Ulster ; but he was broad-minded and tolerant of opposing opinions, and counted among his friends many who differed from him in political outlook. He also took a deep interest in educational matters, and was for nearly 40 years one of the Governors of his old school, the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, and at one time occupied the position of vice-chairman of the Board. He was a Unitarian, belonging to Dunmurry First Presbyterian Church, of which his father was a member. Latterly he became a stipend payer also to the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast. The Ulster Unitarian Christian Association, of which he was one of the founders, had in him one of its most enthusiastic and useful supporters, and only recently it was announced that he had given to the Association's movement in Bangor the handsome donation of £500. The doctor was noted for his charitable disposition, and many philanthropic organisations in and around Belfast have by his death lost a generous friend. A keen student of Nature, he took a practical interest in the activities of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society, of which he was a valued member of long standing. He was the last representative of an old family, and the genealogical tree, which dated back to 1627, was carefully preserved by him, and frequently referred to in answer to enquiries from at home and abroad. The funeral took place at Dunmurry Burying-ground on Wednesday. The numerous attendance was representative of all classes and callings. Services at the house and grave were conducted by Revs. J. A. Kelly (pastor loci), A. Whitford (Moneyrea), and M. Watkins (Mountpottinger), and were in keeping with the desires of the deceased, simple and brief. On Sunday following, 24th May, Mr. Kelly in the pulpit made an appreciative and touching reference to his late friend, and voiced the sorrow of the members of the Congregation at the loss of an old and valued member.

Reports.

Unity Guild.—The Annual Excursion took place on Saturday, May 30th, when some 50 members of the Guild proceeded by train to Ballycarry on the invitation of the Rev. W. G. and Mrs. Marsden. Despite the inclement weather a most enjoyable afternoon was spent in visiting the neighbourhood or in round games in the school room. Tea was provided in the new Tea Rooms and as these are being conducted by a well-known Unitarian lady it was fitting that the guild should be the first guests. Before returning home a hearty vote of thanks was passed to the hospitable people of Ballycarry. Mrs. Marsden suitably replied. The annual service was held in our York Street Church, on Sunday, May 21st, at 3-30. There was a fair congregation present to hear the Rev. A. L. Agnew preach the annual sermon, in which he appealed to the young people of our churches to come forward and give them a new life and pointing out that the future of our churches lay with them. During the service the choir rendered the Anthem, " How Beautiful are The

Feet." The collection this year was in aid of the Orphans' Fund and realised £1 5s. 4d.

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Mountpottinger.—The Annual Floral Services were held on Sunday, June 14th, when as is customary, the Church was prettily decorated by members of the Women's League, aided by the Minister. The spell of warm weather arrived just in time to make sure that plenty of bloom was available for the purpose, and we are grateful to all those friends who contributed the products of their gardens. The morning and evening services were conducted by the Minister, and in the afternoon the special preacher was Rev. A. L. Agnew, B.A., of York Street, whose first appearance it was in the pulpit since he settled as a Minister in Belfast. To a congregation of pleasing dimensions Mr. Agnew gave a very acceptable address, although he prefaced his remarks by pointing out that a Floral Service was one of the most difficult a Minister had to conduct, and for that reason there was often a diffidence on the part of those approached for the purpose of conducting such services.

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Belfast.—First Church—The return of the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., from his American Tour was signalised by a social gathering in the Central Hall, on June 9th. Invitations had not been limited to our own members and we were glad to see friends from places so far distant as Cairncastle and Greyabbey eager to welcome our minister home. In spite of it being so late in the season that many people had already gone for summer holidays, the gathering was one of the largest we have had in the Hall for years, but oh, it was hot! Light refreshments and animated conversation were indulged in from 8 till 9 when Mr. Bowman Malcolm took the chair and in a few well chosen words expressed our delight at having Mr. Rossington once more in our midst. Mr. Rossington, in a very happy speech, expressed his gladness at being back among his "ain folk," though he had thoroughly enjoyed every moment of his somewhat strenuous trip, some amusing incidents of which he proceeded to relate. In more serious vein he concluded by expressing the hope and expectation that another century would not be allowed to pass before a similar exchange between America and Great Britain took place again. This, he declared, was the confirmed opinion of all those who had taken part in the recent interchange. During the evening some excellent music was provided by Miss Allen, L.R.A.M., formerly our leading soprano, and Miss Huxley who favoured us with charming violin solos, Miss M. Curran accompanying both these ladies. Mrs E. R. Jackson gave one or two selections from her seemly unexhaustable repertoire of musical monologues with Miss F. Newman at the paino.

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Ballee.—It is noteworthy that the organist and Treasurer of this Church, Mr. Robert M'Cullen, C.E., M.R.S.I., Down County Council, was unanimously elected Vice-President for Ireland and Member of the Council of the Institution. This took place at Harrogate, where the Conference of Municipal and County Engineers was held this week.

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The Sunday School Conference at Rademon.—The report of the above is unfortunately too late for this issue of the Magazine, but we hope to insert it, together with a block prepared from a photo. taken on the occasion. The illustration is partly responsible for the delay, but it will undoubtedly enhance the value of the account when the latter appears next month.

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Sundown.

Silently the day
Her song over,
Waits the coming grey
Dusk, her lover.

Amethyst and gold
Are the sun's gift,
Ere the night-wings fold
And the stars lift.

Silver and pearl-pale,
The fading light,
Mirrors a cloud veil,
'Tween day and night.

Stilled is the earth fair
With quiet sod,
Communing in prayer
Blessed by her God.

Silently the day
Her song over,
Meets the coming grey
Dusk, her lover.

DOROTHY GREENSIDE.

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